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tured in vice, and their maturity is crime. Our good people should refrain from indiscriminate alms giving, for this is offering a premium for a continuance of present conditions, and our laws should recognize the existence of heredity and make provision whereby the reproduction of this inherited vice could be checked. Such laws may seem harsh, but consider for a moment the saving to the country had the notorious Margaret, the mother of the Jukes family, been imprisoned so that none of her illegitimate children could have come into the world. Such a step would have been deemed cruel, but in the light of what we now know of the criminality of her descendants, society would have been justified in such extreme measures. The record of her children is but a continuous account of murder, highway robbery, burglary and prostitution, while the cost of prosecuting these criminals mounts up into the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

RECENT LITERATURE.

THOMAS' CATALOGUE OF MARSUPIALIA AND MONOTREMATA.¹—This publication is very timely, as it places in the hands of students the means of becoming acquainted with the characters of the species of the important orders named, at a time when it is important that they should have the knowledge. The Marsupialia are arranged in six families, of which three are referred to the Diprotodontia, and three to the Polyprotodontia. The species number as follows :

<i>Diprotodontia.</i>		<i>Polyprotodontia.</i>	
Macropodidæ,	56	Peramelidæ,	14
Phalangeridæ,	34	Dasyuridæ,	26
Phascologyidæ,	3	Didelphidæ,	24
Totals.	93	Totals.	64=157

The systematic treatment is conservative, and in the main satisfactory. Tarsipes seems, however, to deserve family recognition. In the matter of species the novel proposition is maintained that the larger South American opossums are only variations of the species with which we are familiar in this country. *Didelphys cancrivora*, *aurita*, *azarae*, and *albiventris* become synonymous of *D. marsupialis* L. (= *D. virginiana* Kerr).

¹ Catalogue of the Marsupialia and Monotremata in the Collection of the British Museum. By Oldfield Thomas, 1888, pp. 401 ; xxviii plates.

We have fault to find with the lettering and other signs affixed to the paragraphs of the analytical keys of the various divisions. Were it not for the indenting and correct ranging of these paragraphs, their relations to each other could be only discovered by a considerable study of the signs affixed, and then many students, we suspect, would be hopelessly confused. The same system or *unsystem* has been adopted by Mr. Dobson in his catalogue of Chiroptera. It is to be sincerely hoped that in future the taxonomic keys may be arranged on the usual plan, such as for instance is employed by Mr. Boulenger in his catalogues of the Batrachia and Reptilia.

The twenty-eight plates are a welcome aid to the study, but the dental cusps are often poorly represented.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE CRINOIDEA appears now to have reached sound and rational basis as is clearly set forth in a recent important contribution¹ to Crinoid morphology by Messrs. Charles Wachmuth and Frank Springer. Although the subject is approached chiefly from a palæontological standpoint, morphological deductions derived from the latest researches among living crinoids have been duly considered. The systematic arrangement of the Crinoidea as indicated is of not less supreme interest to the palæontologist than to the biologist; and the classification as now proposed appears to be practically in agreement with the views of Dr. P. Herbert Carpenter, the distinguished English authority on recent crinoids. The necessity of a radical change in the existing classification centers around the discovery of the ventral structure in *Taxocrinus*. It is now clearly demonstrated that in this genus, and doubtless in the Ichthyocrinidæ generally, the mouth is open, and surrounded by five conspicuous oral plates, as in the recent genera *Rhisocrinus*, *Bathocrinus*, *Hyocrinus* and *Holopus*; thus differing in structure very materially from other palæozoic crinoids, which have the mouth closed. In the latter group, as is now conclusively shown, the orals are the hitherto denominated "central" and four "proximate" plates. The plan upon which modern crinoids are constructed is therefore one of high antiquity, dating back geologically to the Lower Silurian.

The Crinoidea are thus divisible into

1. Camarata.
2. Inadunata, comprising the branches Larviformia and Fistulata.
3. Articulata, including Ichthyocrinidæ and possibly *Uintacrinus* and *Thaumatocrinus*.
4. Canaliculata, including most of the mesozoic and recent crinoids.—C. R. K.

¹ Discovery of the ventral structure of *Taxocrinus* and *Haplocrinus*, and consequent modifications in the classification of the Crinoidea.—By Charles Wachmuth and Frank Springer. Proceedings of the Academy Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Nov. 27, 1888.